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Security Information

Viet Minh Offensive in Laos

Viet Minh forces taken over one-fifth Laos. Virtually unopposed by French. May set up puppet government.

Viet Minh forces about 19,000 converging on French positions on Plaine des Jarres.

French caught unprepared and nature of counter-measures unknown.

Population Laos 1,200,000. Practically no defense forces and what there is widely spread in static defense posts.

Reinforcements only possible at expense of Viet Minh defense.

Rainy season begins mid-May.

This probably prestige operation but might be prelude to flanking attack on Saigon down Mekong. Also threat to northern Thailand.

Anti-French statements by King of Cambodia now in U.S.A. stating French could not count on his people for aid against Viet Minh. *Might abdicate*

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